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**TOWARDS FILM PRODUCTION FOR CHANGE  
MANAGEMENT IN NIGERIA: A DIRECTORIAL PARADIGM**

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**Abstract**

“Change” is a sacrosanct cultural phenomenon. Its advent is expected to usher in collective reorientation and engender socio-political restructuring. Nigeria, having experienced sixteen years of People’s Democratic Party dominated democracy, naturally anticipated change. The All Progressive Congress capitalised on the change desiring environment and promised to bring about the desired change. In its attempt to facilitate socio-cultural, moral and political change in the country, government adopts “Change” as a slogan. This resulted into various rebranding projects that aim at orchestrating change of attitude and orientation. It becomes pertinent for artistes to rise up to the occasion, to champion these initiatives. Therefore this paper examines the roles that film as an art form should play in the management of this topical phenomenon. Using the Media Representative and the Auteur film theories as theoretical underpinnings, the paper examined the function of film directors in the production of films that will capture the multidimensional transformations in Nigeria during this period of change. It concluded that, for film art to be relevant in Nigeria NOW, it ought to reflect and document the socio-political environment, propagate the transformation agenda, conscientise Nigerians on the ethical and moral concerns of the ongoing change and provide feedback to the government. It is suggested at for film directors to be equal to the challenge; there is a need to avail themselves of appreciable measure of formal training in film directing.

**Keywords:** Film, Production, Change Management, Directorial, Paradigm

**Introduction**

“Change” is an unchangeable cultural phenomenon. Human beings are innately configured to anticipate change. When it comes, as it often does, it ushers in a collective reorientation that engenders a socio-political rebranding and overhauling. Political change transpires when the leader in a nation loses authority or the style of governance in the nation changes. Political change may be as a result of internal and or external politics. Developed countries anticipate and orchestrate political changes and engender a smooth and comprehensible process.

Developing worlds like Nigeria though desire change, how change is handled when it comes leaves much to be desired.

Nigeria having experienced sixteen years of uninterrupted People's Democratic Party (PDP) dominated democracy, naturally anticipated change. The major opposition party, the All Progressive Congress (APC) capitalised on the change desiring environment and launched itself into the mainstream political scenario, promising to bring about the so much anticipated change. Nigerians overwhelmingly welcomed the APC and the "change" it promised to bring. The Nigerian incumbent APC led Government, in an attempt to facilitate socio-cultural, moral and political change in the country, adopted "Change" as a slogan.

This has resulted in various rebranding projects all aimed at orchestrating a change of attitude and orientation in Nigeria. All hands are on deck to bring about the course of actions for change. Nigerian artistes are not left out of the noble enterprise; they are expected to rise up to the occasion, to employ their art to champion the Change initiative. This paper examines the roles that film as a form of art can and should play in the process of managing this all important phenomenon of change. It zooms in from the perspective of the film directors as auteurs of their films. Using the Media Representative and the Auteur film theories as theoretical underpinnings, the paper looks at the function of film directors in the productions of films that will accommodate the multidimensional transformations in Nigeria during this change period as unbiased umpire.

### **Theoretical Framework**

As noted above, the Media Representation and the Auteur theories were adopted as the theoretical framework for the study. Both theories are applicable to the study.

Representation refers to the construction in any medium (especially the mass media) of aspects of reality such as people, places, objects, events and cultural identities. The term refers to the process as well as to its products. For instance into the key markers of identity (class, age, gender and ethnicity) representation involves not only how identities are represented within the text but also how they are constructed in the process of production and reception.(Chandler n. p.)

Media products are representations of the actual world to the viewers. What we see or view is not the real world itself but its representation. Therefore, the representation theory examines the manner in which individuals, groups or institutions are presented to the viewers. In the same article, Chandler explains the concept of audience identification. In his words:

In a film, the director wants the audience to be on the side of the protagonist and hope that the antagonist will fail. This means that the

audience has to identify with the protagonist – they have to have a reason to be ‘on his/her side’. But directors only have a couple of hours to make you identify with the protagonist – so, they have to use a kind of ‘shorthand’. This is known as typing – instead of each character being a complex individual, who would take many hours to understand, we are presented with a ‘typical’ character who we recognize.(n. p.)

The media representation theory is relevant to this study since it is aimed at how film can be packaged to effectively manage the social, political and cultural realities of Nigeria in this period of change. The idea of the Media Representation Theory is that the media, in this case, the film medium can impress on the viewers what has been designed to be conveyed about a people.

The Auteur theory in film criticism, in the words of Saris, “... holds that a director's film reflects the director's personal creative vision, as if they were the primary "auteur" (the French word for "author"). In spite of - and sometimes even because of - the production of the film as part of an industrial process, the auteur's creative voice is distinct enough to shine through all kinds of studio interference and through the collective process” (28). Auteur theory stipulates that films should reflect a director's personal vision. Reputable filmmakers such as Akira Kurosawa, Satyajit Ray, Alfred Hitchcock, Howard Hawks, and Jean Renoir are known as absolute 'auteurs' of their films. In addition, Auteur theory draws from Alexandre Astruc's notion of the *caméra-stylo* or "camera-pen," which encourages directors to use cameras as writers use pens and to guard against the hindrances of traditional storytelling.

The whole idea of this theory is that the director should use the commercial apparatus of filmmaking as a writer uses a pen, and, through the *mise-en-scène*, imprint his or her vision on the work (minimizing the role of the screenwriter). The auteur theory suggests that the screenwriter hands over the script to the director who in turn makes it resonate his (director) personality and vision in the process of adding the performers and pictures (Caughie 45). The pivot of the theory being that there are no good and bad movies, only good and bad directors. It is therefore the responsibility of the film artistic director to consciously package his/her film to manage the Change orchestrated socio-political and cultural milieu. This theory is relevant to this study because it essentially emphasises the authority of the film director in turning the script round, and making the film manage the scene of change that Nigeria is experiencing. No matter the content of the film script and the influence of the marketers, the director has the power to apply his directorial vision. Therefore, the possibility of a film culture that will effectively reflect the current atmosphere of change in Nigeria depends largely on the director's ability to handle it.

### **The Concept and Atmosphere of Change in Nigeria**

Social change ushers in collective reorientation that engenders a socio-political rebranding and overhauling. Political change transpires when the leader in a nation loses authority or the style of governance in the nation changes. Political change may be as a result of domestic and or foreign political views. Developed countries anticipate and orchestrate political changes and engender a smooth and comprehensible process. Change has been occurring for as long as man has existed. The first change happened, perhaps, after man was driven out of the Garden of Eden, from comfort to discomfort. “So He drove out the man: and He placed at the east of the Garden of Eden the cherubim, and the flame of a sword which turned every way, to keep the way of the three of life” (Genesis 3:24). The scientific discovery of the spherical shape of the earth as against the notion of its being flat ushered in global reorientation in natural and social sciences, arts and culture. Nigeria has experienced changes upon changes for as long as it has existed. But not once has “Change” become a mantra in the history of the country as it has since the inception of the APC-Buhari led government.

Though an invention of the ruling party to score a political goal, it has become a song on the lips of most Nigerians. To aggravate the matter, the change that all and sundry enthusiastically welcomed, embraced and hoped for has since metamorphosed into discordant tunes. Most Nigerians have since become disillusioned because their expectations have not been met. The change in Nigeria today is a hydra-headed one. To the common man, it is a negative development that adds no values and has brought in untoward hardship. Whereas, to the ruling class and the affluent it is a welcome development and a long term efficacious undertaking. At the wake of the Buhari led administration, the common man swam in jubilation against the background that the change the regime introduced would immediately translate to better standard of living. It is almost two years now that the government came on board and all her efforts do not seem to bring value to the man on the street. The situation has become so embarrassing that the social media are inundated with the clamour to return to status quo ante.

The common man anticipated a downwards review in the prices of petroleum products but the reverse is the case. Petrol that was sold at #87 per liter, contrary to the expectation of the common man, was reviewed upwards to #145. Foreign exchange rates have skyrocketed and resulted in high cost of living. Even locally produced items are not spared. Garri, the hitherto most common and cheap food item is no longer affordable for the man on the street, Electricity supply has dwindled to near zero and completely nonexistent in some parts of the country; at Akesan in Lagos State where this researcher lives, there has not been light since January this year. As if this is not bad enough Nigerians are made to pay highly for the services not provided. Insecurity is the order of the day, there is no assurance that home coming is guaranteed when people leave there any time of the day. Kidnapping, ritual killing, jungle justice, police brutality etc are the order of the day. Abject poverty permeates and ravages the land so drastically that the

man on the street has given up on hope. This is unfortunately the rustic reality that the present change has brought to the majority of Nigeria.

The government's anti corruption policy has been widely criticised as mere window dressing and efforts in futility. The mass media daily report news of whooping sums of money being retrieved from those who had looted the country dry, but it has not translated to improved condition of living for the common man who finds it impossible to eat three square meals daily. The education system is witnessing negative interference from the government and as such is heading for an imminent collapse. The judicial system has severally let down the common man who cannot in most cases afford the cost of seeking for justice in the first place. This is indeed a critical time in Nigeria. Lifespan has reduced and lots of people are finding solace in suicide. Recently, Dr Allwell Orji, a medical doctor, committed suicide jumped into the lagoon in Lagos following which several others attempted to take their own lives through similar circumstances. Film as a cultural agent is expected to employ its instrumentality to manage the situation. How this is to be, is the focal point of this paper.

Nigeria since independence has tried various forms of Western democracy which unfortunately has left her stranded in the middle of nowhere. Sadly enough modern Nigerian arts, music, dance and theatre, have degenerated. Sexploitation is the order of the day in Nigerian music and other arts. Theatre culture has dwindled to near zero, thanks in part to aesthetic poverty and mediocrity. Film, if creatively directed, can effectively manage the "change" orchestrated aberrations in Nigeria. Forty-four years ago, Hatch opines; "Whereas Nigeria is regarded as a single country, it has nonetheless, been in a state of near-perpetual crisis throughout its life, courtesy of contending ethnic communities." (11) Unfortunately the situation has deteriorated. Fifty-six years after independence Nigeria cannot boast of a democracy that can create an enabling environment for sustainable development. There is no gainsaying the fact there can't be development when there is no peace and good governance. There are so much socio-political, religious, economic dysfunctionalities in the country. Ritual killings, incessant violence and Boko Haram insurgences that defile categorisation are the order of the day. The major factor responsible for these oddities and aberrations is a misfit political system (Olayiwola & Babatope 145). All of these and more, unfortunately constitute what the so call change has given continuity to. The society, phenomenally speaking, is fed up with the situation and it needs proper management if the oneness of Nigeria is to continue to exist.

### **Film as a Cultural Agent**

The film medium wields tremendous ability to represent a people and their culture.

Osofisan, succinctly highlights capability of film as cultural agent:

The films also have significant influence on the way others see us, and

hence on the way they relate to us. We cannot but be concerned therefore about what they are saying, what attitude they are promoting, and what image of us they are projecting. Precisely because they have deservedly won ovation everywhere, the Nollywood film has come to assume authority over our values and our lives, such that what people see in them comes to be taken not just as fictional projection of one imaginative consciousness, but as the truth, authentic mirror of what we really are, as a veritable market of what our society represents, and much worse, of the ideal that we aspire, or must aspire, towards. ([http://www.africultures.com/index.asp?menu=affriche\\_article&no=4533](http://www.africultures.com/index.asp?menu=affriche_article&no=4533) 2006.)

Evidently, the Nigerian video film has tremendous power in influencing the opinions of the international community about us and our culture. It is expected to play a significant role in the management of the change situation we have in our hands. Nigeria, in a critical time such as the current trend of change has presented must not only be reflected but should transcend the realm of mere entertainment and of act as viable instrument of social reorientation, education, information, conscientization and be able to offer tangible contribution to the debate on the way forward for Nigeria. In other words, film, as an art form, has significant influence in making people form opinion of how we are. This speaks volume on the ability of film as a cultural agent. It therefore, underscores the focal point of media representation theory. In like manner, Kafewo, cited by Olayiwola, buttresses Osofisan's views:

Film, no doubt, is one of the art forms that are the greatest carriers of our culture and values. This is why it has been deployed as comrade in arms by different countries in the world to propagate their cultures. Lenin had no doubt that the cinema held the greatest promise in the struggle for the sustenance and spread of the Russian revolution. What we know today about the American, British, Indian, and the so-called Chinese films (actually made in Hong Kong) came from the arts ably carried by the film medium. (Olayiwola 5).

### **What is Film Directing?**

It is expedient at this juncture to briefly delve into film directing in order to be able to appreciate the significant role the artistic director plays in the film production schema. Robert Benson, French director opines "a film is born in my head and I kill it on paper. It is brought back to life by the actors and then killed again in the camera. It is then resurrected into a final life in the editing room



where the dismembered pieces are assembled into their finished form” (Bordwell & Thompson 20).

Film production is a multifaceted and complex process. In most cases, it involves three main phases. According to Ekwuazi, “irrespective of the mode of production and the specific medium (whether for the small screen of the television or the large screen of the cinema), the production chain is made up of three phases: the preparation, the shooting and the assembly” (5). Mamer describes the three phases:

A film is organised into three critical phases: preproduction, production, and postproduction. Preproduction constitutes the planning and preparation: the process of identifying and securing all elements-aesthetic, human and material-that will be needed for the film. This includes fine-tuning the script, casting, location scouting, set design, and whatever it takes to get into a position to shoot. Production includes all the actual shooting. Producer often plays a critical role here, but the director is usually the key decision-making force in both of these stages of a film. Some directors are also involved in postproduction, the editing and all the detailed finishing processes (24).

The execution of these stages is guided by various rules and each is handled by various experts in related areas. Put succinctly; “these three phases include many particular jobs. Most films that we see in the theatre culminate from dozens of specialised tasks carried out by hundreds of experts. This fine-grained division of labour has proved to be a reliable way to prepare, shoot and assemble....films (Thompson & Bordwell 24).

The preparation stage is the phase where the concept/idea of the film, (the story to be told) is put on paper in a particular form. It is the scriptwriting stage. It is at this stage that some producers decide to source for funds, and put some logistics in place for the proper commitment of the idea of the film to paper. The shooting stage is the time when the filmmaker/director creates images via series of frames produced by camera in a continuous process, otherwise referred to as shots. In other words the film is shot or recorded. During the assembly stage, the editing is done and the images and sound are synchronised in their finishing appearance. This is the stage where special sound or light effects are added and titles and subtitles are included. Thompson and Bordwell opine: “every stage changes what went before. The idea for the film may be radically modified when the script is hammered out; the script’s presentation of the action may be drastically changed in shooting; and the material that is shot takes on new significance in the process of assemblage. (24)

The process of filmmaking, which is, fundamentally a three-stage procedure captures all that transpires from script to screen. The script is the skeleton that takes on flesh as the production progresses and it is clothed in the editing studio, after which it is ready to go. Expectedly, each of the three stages of film production assumes fundamental importance in the production chain, the fact is that one cannot do without the other and no attempt should be made to over emphasize one to the detriment of the other. One fact that cannot be jettisoned is the “one who fails to plan, plans to fail”. As a result, a film production that is not accurately arranged in preparation is a catastrophe in the making. Even in the case of Nigerian films wherein a substantial number of the films made are improvisational, success depends on the effort of key creative, resourceful and ingenious personnel.

Specifically, at the preproduction stage, it is important that the script, which is the frame and springboard of the production, be well taken care of. The first and most fundamental step is to arrive at a credible script. Film scripts can emerge from various sources; from original scripts, adaptation of short stories or novels, as in the case with Tunde Kelanni’s film, *Dazzling Mirage*, which is an adaptation of Yinka Egbokhare’s novel of the same title or simple story idea that the producer wants the scriptwriter to develop. However advanced the script is, the producer generally engages writers to rewrite, adapt, or develop the project, (Mamer 60).

Bordwell and Thompson stress the characteristics of the script; “the screenplay will go through several stages. These stages include a *treatment*, a synopsis of the action; then one more full-length script; and a final version, the *shooting script*. Extensive rewriting is common, and writers have resigned themselves to seeing their work recast over and over” (24). Most experts are of the view that a script ought to have a three-act composition; the first-act climax featuring within a quarter of the way into the films, the second-act climax taking place somewhere around three-quarters of the way through, while the climax of the final act solves the protagonist’s problem. Writers are equally expected to include *plot points*, twists that turn the action in innovative directions. (Thompson & Bordwell 43). The screenplay plays a significant role in the artistic and commercial success of the film. It is important that it must be well focused right from the start. If it is deficient, turning it around during the production process becomes a draconian task. The importance of the screenplay cannot be overemphasised. Rabiger opines; “though every prescription has its exceptions dramatists agree that most stories need at least one character who shows some growth and change. This is generally called development, and can be true even for a minor character if he or she pursues an agenda; that is, struggles for something and faces inner conflict or outer opposition” (144).

The point being made is that the screenplay is a structured, standardised form of writing, with specific rules and regulations. A good screenplay should be primarily concerned with behaviour, action and reaction. A well-written screenplay avoids stagnant scenes where people verbalise what they think and feel



(Rabiger 101). Nicholas submits: "The script is the most important part of your movie. It is the foundation on which everything is built: acting, cinematic style, location, audience reaction...everything. You cannot make a great movie without a great script. It is that simple"(1). Though Nicholas' submission that one cannot make a great movie without a great script is debatable and somewhat hyperbolic, it, nevertheless, underscores the significance of a well-written script in film production. In the words of Armer:

A script also called (screenplay) is the basic building block of any dramatic project, whether in theatre, radio, video tape, or film. It is a carefully devised blueprint from which actors, director, and technicians will work. Through a succession of dramatic scenes, it presents the writer's vision of a fictitious world a world in which characters fight battles, weep, fall in love. Reach for the stars or die ... a world that will be shaped and interpreted by a director and communicated through an actor to an audience. (93)

Of equal significance is the producer's role; even at the preparation stage. In the words of Kolker, "depending upon a number of factors, a producer is an initiator of projects, a fund-raiser, a deal maker, and an administrator" Kolker (128). "The tasks of the *producer* are chiefly financial and organisational. She or he may be an "independent" producer, unearthing the film projects and trying to convince production companies or distributors to finance the film. Or a producer may work for a distribution company and generate ideas for the film. A studio may also hire a producer to put together a particular package," (Borwell and Thomson 24).

He (the producer) tends the job all the way through the script development, acquires pecuniary support and organises to employ those who will execute the project.

During the shooting and assemblage the producer usually acts as the liaison between the writer and or the director and the company that is financing the film. After the film is completed the producer will often have the task of arranging the distribution, promotion and marketing of the film and of monitoring the paying back of the money invested in the production. (Borwell and Thomson 24).

The involvement of a director, which is of interest here, is to achieve artistic success. The ultimate job of the director is to read between the lines of the screenplay and bring it to life on the screen. His inventiveness and input to the making of the film begins where the writer's creativity ends. "A director must read the script many times, with the first three times being the most important in terms of understanding the text" (Schreibman 6). The first reading should reveal to him

the story line. The second time should emphasise character analysis and the third time should be an intuitive reading that links the director's internal instinct to the content of the play and become closer to it. "Through the technique of at least three specific readings a director will see problems with the story and be better prepared to guide a writer down a path to solve them and ultimately make it a better, more fulfilling story" (Schreibman 7).

The second stage of the production scheme, which is "shooting" or production, is the phase where actors come on set and in front of the camera. Here are present; the director, the costumier, makeup artist, production manager, camera operators, set designer, location driver, the welfare person, first aid health officer and so on. The production stage is where the director is most prominent and directing takes the centre stage.

Though the director's role cuts across the three phases of film production; the preproduction, production and postproduction phases, his impact is most felt in the area of production. The production stage, as hinted earlier on, captures the actual shooting and all the activities that go along with it. Eric Sherman opines; "A director interprets the scripts, coaches the performers, and interrelates the all, incidents after incidents, thereby, articulating what was initially considered." (Sherman xvii) Bare corroborates this view:

King Vidor, the first president of the Director's Guild and whose earlier films were infused with serious themes, maintained that the movie director has a strong and articulate voice, and he/she should use it well: "In my opinion, the motion picture is the greatest medium of expression ever invented. The films that have expressed the greatest unity, and given the most satisfaction to the viewers, have been those in which the guiding hand has imposed on every action of the film's many divisions. Story, casting, setting, photography, acting should all bespeak one mind." Vidor was obviously referring to the belief that the director is the most important single person in the creation of film entertainment -a doctrine formulated over thirty years prior to Truffaut's conceiving his auteur theory. (28-29)

Alan A. Armer defines who a director is; "the person who shapes a programme's message through the manipulation of artistic and technical elements, seeking to maximise the effect on the audience" (373). In the above views, Sherman, Bare and Armer inadvertently itemise some of the activities of the director while on the job. Therefore, the following is a review of the aspects of production such as auditioning, casting, rehearsal, presenting the play to the cast and crew otherwise referred to as play analysis, taking the shots, camera

movements, camera language, blocking the scene/ movement and post-mortem. To start with, what is film directing? Armer gives an interesting definition of directing:

You walk to a television studio or a motion picture soundstage. Overhead, electricians are making final adjustment to the light. In one mirrored corner, makeup artists apply finishing touches to performers' faces while hairdressers brush and spray performers' hair.

Near the lighted set the camera crew scratch chalk lines on the floor, marking camera positions for the upcoming scene. Within the set, a dozen crew members politely but relentlessly question an Authority

figure about props, scripts, costume, productions schedule, retakes, and location. The Authority figure answers quickly, waves them away, and then nods to someone offstage. As you watch, the assistant directors bring the cast onto the set. The Authority figure whispers a few final instructions, a bell clangs for silence. Outside the soundstage, a red light

blinks a warning to passersby. Inside, a camera assistant holds a slate in

front of the camera. Someone calls, "Speed." And then the Authority figure speaks the two-syllable word that will bring the characters to life. In television and film, such authority figures are the spine of any production pattern. They organise, assemble, interpret, and dramatise the elements of a show. Most conspicuously, they create order out of chaos. We call them directors because they direct the activities of a wide-ranging group of technical experts and crafts people as well as the efforts of the creative artist. (373)

The film director is an authority figure. "The ability to understand script structure, to analyse its progression, and to help create pungent dialogue all define the director's role." (Armer 7)

Directors come in all human types - tall, short, fair, dark introverts, extrovert, loquacious, taciturn, male, female, gay, and straight. The only common qualities seem to be tenacity, vision, inventiveness in the face of obstacles, and a love for the filmmaking process. (Rabiger 4) Film directing is not a calling that one ventures into for the purpose of satisfying personal ego or for inordinate ambition and personal aggrandisement. It is a noble, disciplined, skilful and intellectually taxing profession, that passion; enthusiasm, discipline, creative professionalism and an unlimited desire for pertinent knowledge that can make one sail through. After mastering the script above all inhibitions and the crew is in place, the next thing to do is to conduct tryout for the would-be cast of the production.

### **Film Production for Change Management in Nigeria: A Directorial Paradigm**

It is evident from the foregoing that film is a cultural agent. It is equally obvious that the artistic director wields tremendous influence in film production process. In fact, as the auteur of his film the onus is on him to ensure his films are consciously directed toward the management of the situation that change has generated in Nigeria. In order to produce films that will effectively manage the situation in Nigeria during this period of change, the artistic director has to capitalise his influence on the production process to ensure the following. The director needs to understand that film is essentially a cultural agent and that the fundamental responsibility of film as art is not only to entertain but to reflect the society and when need be to serve as an instrument of reorientation, rebranding, reassurance and enthronement of an enabling environment of societal peace and growth.

His films must transcend the realm of empty amusement; avoid the insignificant, over-romanticising and superfluous issues in the story being told. Cast and crew must be made up of ingenious and creative personnel. To create films that can manage the atmosphere of change in Nigeria the under listed are needful.

#### **The Film Scripts**

The film scripts reflect the widespread socio-political truth with a view to enlightening Nigerians about the prospects of the seemingly negative policies of the present government. Film scripts decisively and truly x-ray the foundations of the systemic failure in the society, cinematographically capture it and offer pragmatic home-grown way out. The scripts need to do better than ordinarily reflecting the inconveniences but should offer sound and logical coping strategies and ways out of the quagmire. The scripts should not be pessimistic. No matter the sources of the funding, films should not be seen to be tools of government propaganda.

The perfect film in an arena of systemic failure such as evident in Nigeria today should be low budget story driven scripts that will soon after release, be aired on TV for easy access to all and sundry. High budget film will take time to go round as producers would restrict screening to Cinemas for a long time so as to recoup their investments. A film that has been consciously directed to address topical issues ought to circulate fast in order to reach its target audience in good time to be able to achieve its purpose. For films to achieve the purpose of effectively managing the change scenario in Nigeria, they should endeavour to reach out to the majority of people in the society. It should capture the reality of the here and now, depict the likely consequences of being pessimistic and to signal the way forward to a glorious future. In the change period, films that are devoted to the liberation of the masses, resolution of conflicts, religious tolerance, the enthronement of societal reconciliation and the realisation of an enduring

democracy should not insist on doing it the western ways. The problem is ours and must be solved our own way.

### **The Artistic Director and Professionalism**

The artistic director in Nigeria is confronted with some factors that inhibit his commitment to professionalism. He has to contend with interference from the producer, who in most cases, is just business inclined. The producers, at times dictate who to play what role and the interpretation to give to some situations. The artistic director, who has bills to pay and dependants to cater for, is compelled to play along so as to earn money. This type of situation gags artistry, hinders creativity and thwarts professionalism. An equally unpleasant reality faced by artistic directors in Nigeria is the unethical practice of the Nigerian Films and Video Censors Board. The censor board formulate policies that are sometimes inimical to creativity and perverts verisimilitude. One of such is the ban placed on the appearance of "blood" in Nigerian film. Therefore, a person is shot pointblank, he falls and dies from the injuries purportedly sustained from the gun shot and no "blood" is sighted. Worse still is the aberration of mandating filmmakers to take of scenes because they appear critical of the government of the day

The artistic director should be scrupulously skilful, fearless and dedicated. Since, as the auteur, a lot depends on him, and in order to be able to deliver, it is absolutely important that he avails himself of the pedagogy of formal training. The importance of formal training in film directing cannot be over-emphasised. Film directing is an art that has developed into a profession. A profession according to *Merriam-Webster's Dictionary* is "a type of job that requires special education, training, or skill." (Electronic version) Wickenden identifies six characteristics of a profession:

- Renders a specialized service based upon advanced specialized knowledge and skill, and dealing with its problems primarily on an intellectual plane rather than on a physical or a manual labour plane.
- Involves a confidential relationship between a practitioner and client or an employer.
- Is charged with a substantial degree of public obligation by virtue of its profession of specialized knowledge.
- Enjoys a common heritage of knowledge, skill, and status to the cumulative store of which professional men are bound to contribute through their individual and collective efforts.
- Performs its services to a substantial degree in the general public interest, receiving its compensation through limited fees rather than

through direct profit from the improvement in goods, services, or knowledge, which it accomplishes.

- Is bound by a distinctive ethical code in its relationships with clients, colleagues, and the public.  
([http://www.africultures.com/index.asp?menu=afrique\\_article&no=4533](http://www.africultures.com/index.asp?menu=afrique_article&no=4533))

Rutledge, in his *Design Professionalism*, itemised ten characteristics of a profession and professionals, two of which are as follows:

**Based on specialised, theoretical knowledge**

Professionals render specialized services based on theory, knowledge, and skills that are most often peculiar to their profession and generally beyond the understanding and/or capability of those outside of the profession. Sometimes, this specialization will extend to access to the tools and technologies used in the profession.

**Institutional preparation**

Professions typically require a significant period of hands-on, practical experience in the protected company of senior members before aspirants are recognized as professionals. After this provisional period, ongoing education toward professional development is compulsory. A profession may or may not require formal credentials and/or other standards for admission (<http://designprofessionalism.com/defining-design-professionalism-1.php>.)

The above underscore the fact that a profession is more than a mere possession of skills. It requires training - formal and informal. Formal in the sense that there are organised discussions of the rules, theories, principles and methods, history of the practice and an understanding of the different stages and phases of its development. What it was like at inception and how it has become what it is today. Formal training incorporates, giving students practical and theoretical assignments and periodic examinations. Formal training provides intellectual profundity. It broadens people's horizons and equips people to be able to think "outside the box".

The advantages of formal training over informal training in terms of how far people may be creative are evident in the merits and demerits of formal training and informal training respectively. Formal training can be seen as the process in which training and developing are provided to people through information, mental development, dexterity and enviable disposition in a much-planned way that is certified after a given period. Informal training lacks strict schedule and goes on usually at the pace of the student. Non-formal training takes place outside of an organised school. Home schooling can be considered a non-formal education process because the curriculum does not have to lead to a diploma. Students are not under any obligation to demonstrate, periodically, the



extent of what they have learnt. Apart from skill acquisition, formal training ensures that people learned and acquire knowledgeable for their future and are equipped to be problem solvers and able to face and surmount challenges. All formal trainings are structured to an even-handed acquisition of practical skills and intellectual development. With formal training one is able to understand the past, the present and project into the future of a profession. Whereas in formal training one attends an institution; a college or university for an actual degree, an informal training is simply learning a trade from someone else. Whereas people may learn freely and at their own pace in an informal training environment, its bane is low efficiency, productivity and shallow creativity

Over the years, practitioners of the profession of film directing have come up with blueprint of the methodology. However, not a locked blueprint as it gives leeway for dynamism and accommodates the ever-changing technological environment. They are rules that govern the conduct and operational mechanism of film directing. From many years of practice evolve tested hypotheses that have metamorphosed into theories. All these are not subjects of discussion at informal training setups. There are deep intellectual discussions that are resident in organised institutions that offer formal training in filmmaking. As such one with formal training learns the theories, principles and the ideological framework of what is done on the field. Therefore formal training is fundamental for directors who desire to take their art beyond the pedestal of empty amusement.

## **Conclusion**

This essay is an attempt to justify the capability of film art for effective change management in Nigeria. This study concludes that in order to achieve film production for change management in Nigeria what is needed are films that facilitate a culture of dialogue instead of basically entertaining. There is need for political reorientation and social conscientization of the people. Nigerians need to be educated that violence cannot solve Nigerian problems. The film that will achieve this must emphasize the need for mass education, apposite engineering of elections, religious open-mindedness and tolerance, and amicable settlement of conflicts etc.

It concludes that for film art to be significantly relevant in Nigeria during this period, it should, among other things, reflect and document the socio-political environment, propagate the transformation agenda, conscientise Nigerians on ethical and moral concerns of the ongoing change and provide a feedback mechanism to the government of the day on how it is faring and the perception of Nigerians about it.

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